



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
APRIL 7, 2008**

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**PRESS RELEASE**  
***U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN UTAH  
TO OPEN BRANCH OFFICE  
IN ST. GEORGE***

***ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEYS, LAW ENFORCEMENT  
PARTNERS WILL FOCUS ON FEDERAL CRIMES IN  
FAST-GROWING AREA OF THE NATION***

ST. GEORGE, UTAH -- The fast-growing metro area in the nation is getting a U.S. Attorney's Office branch office.

U.S. Attorney for Utah Brett L. Tolman, joined by Senator Orrin G. Hatch and Congressman Jim Matheson, announced today in St. George that the U.S. Department of Justice and Congress have given approval for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Utah to open a branch office in St. George which, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, had a growth of 39.8 percent between 2000 and 2006 making it the fastest-growing metro area in the nation.

Joining Tolman, Hatch, and Matheson in speaking at the press conference were Timothy Fuhrman, FBI Special Agent in Charge in Utah, Chief Deputy Marshal Jim Thompson, and Washington County Sheriff Kirk Smith. Several other local, state, and federal law enforcement officers,

prosecutors, civic leaders, and community members also participated in today's event.

The approval also includes gives the U.S. Marshals Service in Utah authority to open an office and add full-time personnel resources in the St. George area.

Tolman said immediate steps are being taken, in coordination with the General Services Administration, to find space for the U.S Attorney's Office in St. George. For the short term, the office will use space in the Washington County Attorney's Office. The office staff will include two Assistant U.S. Attorneys, a legal administrative specialist, and a legal assistant. Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul Kohler has already been reassigned to the St. George Branch Office. Kohler, who has a bachelor's degree and law degree from Brigham Young University, clerked for Robert H. Cleland of the U.S. District court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He was a trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice's Antitrust Division in the Dallas Field Office from 2000 to 2007. He has handled complex white-collar crime cases around the country. He also was a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Dallas from 2005 to 2007 where he prosecuted a variety of criminal cases, including drug and firearm cases.

The application process for the other three positions closed last week and the hiring process will begin immediately, Tolman said.

Tolman also said he hopes longtime Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul Graf, an Assistant Utah Attorney General who has worked on federal cases in the St. George area for many years, will continue his work as a SAUSA.

Tolman said the federal prosecutors working in St. George will handle a wide range of cases originating in St. George and other Southern Utah communities. They will coordinate with drug, violent crime, white collar, and general crimes section chiefs in the Salt Lake City Office to screen cases for federal prosecution.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Robert Braithwaite will continue to preside over federal cases in St. George. All stages of criminal proceedings other than grand jury matters, trials, and sentencing hearings may be conducted in St. George.

The U.S. Marshals Service in St. George, which has been operating with a part-time position, will get two full-time Deputy U.S. Marshals. “This will enable us to provide greater assistance to the law enforcement community and the citizens of the southern part of the state. These agents will work cooperatively to enhance the services that are currently being provided by other federal components of the U.S. Department of Justice,” Marshals Chief Deputy James Thompson said today.

“We look forward to providing the services of our Joint Criminal Apprehension Team (JCAT), where we can partner with state, county and city law enforcement agencies to arrest fugitives and keep the community safe, on a full-time basis in this area,” Thompson said.

The Marshals’ increased presence in the federal court in St. George will offer enhanced security for the judiciary, the court employees and the visitors to the court facility as the case loads increase, Thompson said.

Several federal law enforcement agencies already have agents in St. George and are stepping up efforts to get additional resources. Tolman points out that with the new office in St. George, agents will not have to spend as much time transporting prisoners between St. George and Salt Lake City for appearances which will increase the time they can spend investigating crime in Southern Utah.

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